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STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR, I/GNEA, B/BXN,  
B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN  
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON TERRORISM

Editorial Commentary

-- "Suspicious terrorism"

Columnist Ibrahim Gharaibeh writes on the op-ed page of centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (09/05): "The crime attack against the tourists yesterday added more justifications to the instability and the harassment that Arabs and Muslims are already being subjected to in their interests, travels, residency, and education in all countries of the world. The attack also pulls the plug on all attempts towards political and democratic reform, openness and stability. It is no longer sufficient to say that terrorist operations are due to extremism, Takfir, deprivation and tension, or that they are tense and extremist actions against American and Israeli attacks in Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon. As true as they are, these statements do not provide a convincing explanation for the violence and the terrorism be that with regards to timing or location. Accepting these statements simply means that there is a person or an extremist organization that believes that tourists are atheists and are enemies of Islam and the Muslim nation, and that by killing them, they are avenging the martyrs in Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Burma and the Philippines.... This is a scenario that cannot be believed or accepted, and one must search for other more logical motives and interests. Who benefits? Who wants Arabs and Muslim all over the world to be treated with contempt and hardline security? Who wants a status of instability and chaos to be present in Jordan and the Arab and Muslim countries? Who benefits from damage to economic interests and business in Jordan? There is a mysterious and suspicious situation that is leading societies and countries towards tension and extremism. Every time societies and countries come close to stability, we are faced with surprise suspicious attacks that even children cannot believe they are in defense of holy sites and fighting the Kuffar. We need a new though methodology and we need to look for a new vision, which I do not claim I have. But condemning terrorism and putting murderers and terrorists on trial are not enough."

-- "The Roman Amphitheater crime"

Chief Editor Ayman Safadi writes on the back-page of centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (09/05): "Murder without purpose; killing innocent people; nihility that belittles life; deformation of the justice of Arab causes; damage to the interests of a country and to the image of a nation. Nabil Ahmad Ja'oura did not end the injustice against Palestine nor did he stop the oppression against

Lebanon with the crime that he committed which claimed the lives of innocent people. On the contrary, this killer hurt the very causes that he claims he committed the crime to defend. There is no information yet about the political identity or organizational links of the perpetrator of yesterday's criminal act ... but the way he committed his crime shows that he acted individually. It does not a genius though to conclude that the killer is going to hide behind the justice of the Palestinian cause and the barbarism of the Israeli killing machine to justify his attack against innocent people.... Citizens have the right to be angry at the injustice that their brothers in Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq are suffering from, and it is a human, constitutional and legal right for them to express this anger by legal peaceful means. Killing innocent people is a crime that does not justify any anger, desperation or frustration."

-- "Terrorism in the Roman Amphitheater"

Columnist Fahd Khitan writes on the inside page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (09/05): "We are facing a serious development that puts the state and the society before a new challenge for the following considerations: First, this is the first operation where its perpetrator succeeds to target tourists in a group ... which is similar to Luxor operation in Egypt in the nineties; Second, the seriousness of this operation is that it happened in a public and open place, and while it is possible to secure hotels and shopping malls, it difficult to provide similar protection in public places and the streets; Third, such an attack cannot be pre-empted with security and checking measures; Fourth, the most serious consideration is that the perpetrator of the terrorist action is a Jordanian citizen unlike the hotel bombings and the Aqaba attack.... I think we are going to hear talk that links it to the deteriorating situation in the region and the Israeli and American terrorism against the people and people's reaction to all that, but this justification is not permissible at all, not just in Jordan but anywhere else as well. The honorable resistance in Lebanon has already provided the model for ethical confrontation with the enemy. Targeting innocent people is nothing but cowardly and terrorist."

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